

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6016

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SW

SUBJECT: CRISIS WITHIN SWEDISH COMMUNIST PARTY DEEPENS

REF: A-122

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. THE LONG-SMOLDERING CRISIS WITHIN THE MAIN SWEDISH COMMUNIST PARTY, KNOWN AS THE LEFT COMMUNIST PARTY (VPK), HAS FLARED UP AGAIN IN RECENT WEEKS, THREATENING TO SPLIT THE PARTY. THE LATEST DISPUTE CENTERS AROUND THE EFFORTS OF THE PARTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, LED BY CHAIRMAN LARS WERNER, TO IMPOSE DISCIPLINE ON THE SO-CALLED "STALINIST" FACTIONS IN THE NORTHERN PROVINCES OF NORRBOTTEN AND VASTERBOTTEN. THE "STALINISTS" HAVE ADVANCED THEIR STRONGLY PRO-MOSCOW LINE THROUGH THEIR DAILY PAPER NORRSKENSFLANMAN. AT THE PARTY CONGRESS THIS PAST SPRING (REFAIRGRAM), THIS GROUP HAD DEMANDED THAT THE PARTY FOLLOW "ORTHODOX" MARXIST-LENINISM, AND TOOK THE PARTY LEADERSHIP TO TASK FOR ITS CRITICISM OF THE

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SOVIETS FOR THE 1968 CZECH INVASION AND THEIR HANDLING OF

THE SOLZHENITSYN CASE. ALTHOUGH THE STALINISTS WERE DEFEATED BY THE PARTY LEADERSHIP AT THE CONGRESS, THEY HAVE CONTINUED THEIR DISSENT THROUGH THEIR ORGAN NORRSKENSFLAMMEN.

2. LAST WEEK THE LEADERSHIP ACTED, REMOVING THE CHAIRMAN OF THE VASTERNNORRLAND DISTRICT, GUNNAR NORBERG, FROM HIS POST, AND DISMISSING HIM AND THREE OTHERS FROM MEMBERSHIP ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. IN ADDITION, THE PARTY LEADERSHIP DECREED THAT NORRSKENSFLAMMAN COULD ONLY BE DISTRIBUTED IN THE NORTHERN PROVINCES, POINTING OUT THAT THE ONLY VPK PAPER WHICH IS RECOGNIZED AS THE PARTY ORGAN IS THE TRI-WEEKLY NY DAG. EXPLAINING THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S DECISION, PARTY SECRETARY TORE FORSBERG WAS QUOTED BY THE PRESS AS ASSERTING THAT "WE REALIZED THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO ACT. IN THE SHORT TERM THE DECISION MAY SEEM NEGATIVE, BUT FOR THE LONG TERM IT IS POSITIVE AND CORRECT." NOTING THAT THE NORTHERN MEMBERS HAD TAKEN A LINE ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DIFFERING FROM THE DECISIONS REACHED AT THE PARTY CONGRESS, FORSBERG SAID THAT "THIS DOES NOT RPT NOT MEAN THAT A VPK MEMBER MUST NOT FAVOR THE SOVIET UNION. BUT THE CONGRESS REACHED A DECISION ON INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS AND IT IS ABSURD THAT THE POPULARLY ELECTED PEOPLE AND FUNCTIONARIES SHOULD GO AGAINST THE DECISIONS OF THE CONGRESS."

3. THE NORTHERN DISSIDENTS HAVE ALREADY INDICATED THEIR UNWILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT THE DECISIONS OF THE PARTY'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. THE PRESS QUOTED THE CHIEF EDITOR OF NORRSKENSFLAMMAN AS DESCRIBING THE BAN ON DISTRIBUTION OF HIS PAPER AS "UNIQUE TO SWEDISH PRESS HISTORY," ADDING THAT HE KNEW OF NO LAW "WHICH CAN PREVENT US FROM SELLING THE PAPER IN ANY WAY OR ANY AREAS WE WANT." END UNCLASSIFIED.

4. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. COMMENT. AN ACTUAL SPLIT WITHIN THE VPK WOULD HAVE IMPORTANT REPERCUSSIONS FOR SWEDISH POLITICS, SINCE SHOULD THE PARTY DROP BELOW FOUR PERCENT OF THE POPULAR VOTE, IT WOULD LOSE ITS REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT, WHICH IN TURN WOULD MAKE LIKELY A NON-SOCIALIST OPPOSITION MAJORITY IN THE RIKSDAG. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE MOST RECENT PUBLIC OPINION POLLS SHOW THE PARTY'S POPULAR STANDING AT EXACTLY FOUR PERCENT, AND THE CURRENT PARTY CRISIS INCREASES THE PROSPECT THAT THE PARTY MAY POLL LESS THAN FOUR PERCENT IN THE SEPTEMBER 1976 ELECTIONS. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. STRAUSZ-HUPE'

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